

THE BIRDS OF THE MOORE RIVER GORGE COUNTRY

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Close on 50 years ago Mr. F. Lawson Whitlock investigated the bird-life of the Moore River, in the vicinity of Mogumber, 70 miles north of Perth (*The Emu*, vol. 4, 1905, p. 132). As this is a tract of country which has been little visited by naturalists in the intervening years and is an area which constitutes a frontier zone in the distribution of certain species, it seemed worth while to pay it a visit and to determine if any notable changes had occurred in the avifauna since Whitlock's careful survey in October-November, 1903.

The opportunity to do so presented itself in August 1950 when a week was spent there. Through the courtesy of the Native Affairs Department we were able to live in the temporarily unoccupied homestead of Shanaway Farm, 15 miles west of Mogumber and 24 miles west-south-west of New Norcia, and now a portion of the Moore River Native Settlement. It was of interest that Mr. Whitlock himself had stayed at Shanaway, during part of his 1903 survey, as the guest of the then owner, Mr. Finucane. The old homestead still stands, some chains to the west of the present building.

The whole of the area worked was in the Darling "Range" peneplain, though the country rock was of Mesozoic sediments lying between the Hill River fault and the Darling fault line. This latter fault line, the boundary between the sedimentary rocks and the granite, runs just east of the railway line. We came on the contact in the vicinity of Mogumber railway station, about a quarter of a mile upstream in the east branch of the Moore River. The valley in the granite country is shallow and unimpressive. During its passage through the area of the sedimentary rocks, however, the Moore has carved a narrow gorge, which is a rather striking feature of the topography from Mogumber to Regan's Ford, where the river enters the coastal plain at the Hill River fault scarp. This scarp is quite an insignificant feature compared with the Darling Range scarp further south.

The gorge varies in width from about 100 to 300-400 yards and in depth from about 100 to 150 feet. The sharply defined rim forms a breakaway above a steep talus slope into the floor of the valley, along which the Moore forms a succession of extensive pools, separated by narrows which are easily fordable.

There are two main bird habitats in the gorge area: the heavily timbered gorge itself and the sand heath of the plateau or peneplain. Along the edge of the gorge, however, there is a fringe of lightly wooded country which resembles the Swan coastal plain in type.

The principal tall trees of the gorge are river or flooded gum (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and marri (*E. calophylla*) and along the frontage are thickets of paperbark (*Melaleuca parviflora*). Other common trees in the association include stinkwood (*Jacksonia*) and banksia of several species, *Banksia grandis*, *B. Menziesii*, and *B. prionotes* being represented, although they are not all generally distributed.

Blaekboys (*Xanthorrhoea*) and zamia palms also occur, with patches of braeken fern and a diversity of shrubs. At the time of our visit the gorge in places presented delightful rock gardens with vivid drifts of a pink everlasting and a variety of orchids, the genus *Caludenia* being that chiefly represented. The wooded fringe on the plateau consists mainly of banksia, marri, Christmas tree (*Nuytsia floribunda*), woolly bush (*Adenanthos sericea*), holly-leaved dryandra (*Dryandra floribunda*), with occasional glades of wandoo (*Eucalyptus redunca*), and, farther out on the plain, stunted sheoak (*Casuarina*) and odd trees of coast blaekbutt (*Eucalyptus Todtiana*).

Most of the bird life was met with in the gorge and the wooded fringe on the edge of the plateau, particularly in the dryandra thickets. Out on the plain, however, one might wander for miles without coming on a bird.

The sand plain is the southerly termination of the vast plain which extends northwards to the Murchison River (see C. A. Gardner, *W.A. Nat.*, vol. 1, 1947, p. 1) and in this district it continues some 12 miles south of the Moore River. We were too early to witness the peak of the flowering of the sand plain flora. Smokebush (*Conospermum*) was conspicuously budded, and a lambertia with pink flowers and a white-flowered grevillea were in bloom. We came on patches of flowering winter bell (*Blancoa canescens*) and blaek kangaroo paw (*Macropidia fuliginosa*) in bud. Others noted included hovea, daviesia, blue tinsel lily (*Calectasia cyanea*), hibernertia, dryandra, and acacia, but the host was still to bloom. The striking dwarf mallee (*Eucalyptus macrocarpa*) was sparsely represented in one or two localities but was not in flower. Stunted blaekboys were a dominant feature on some parts of the plateau.

To the east, in the granite, the country is a wandoo and jam (*Acacia acuminata*) woodland.

Despite the fact that some of the country in the vicinity of the gorge was taken up for settlement a long while ago there has been relatively little alteration of the environment. When Whitlock visited the district there were two holdings on this section of the river, at Shanaway Farm and in the vicinity of Regan's Ford where a Mr. Bandy farmed a property. Now, though there are extensive clearings at both localities, with pasture paddocks, neither is under resident occupation. In 1918 the Moore River Native Settlement was established 7 miles west of Mogumber, but the clearings here are restricted.

LIST OF SPECIES OBSERVED

Emu (*Dromaius novae-hollandiac*).—An adult, with a brood of young chicks which immediately scattered, was encountered on the edge of the sand plain 10 miles west of Mogumber. Two of the chicks made away together for some distance along the track. Another was captured for inspection. When released it ran off, setting an even pace, and following as nearly as possible an undeviating line out into the scrub. Meanwhile the adult had circled round and vanished.

Common Bronzewing (*Phaps chalcoptera*).—No pigeons of any kind were seen in the immediate neighbourhood of the Moore River, but a Bronzewing was flushed from the roadside near Wannamal.

Little Pied Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*).—Single individuals were occasionally disturbed from the larger pools in the gorge section of the Moore River. Fresh-water cobbblers (*Tandanus bostocki*) and a species of crayfish (*Cheraps*) occur on which they may subsist.

Darter (*Anhinga rufa*).—One bird was seen in a pool a mile east of Shanaway Farm.

Banded Plover (*Zonifer tricolor*).—Noted at Mogumber and also at Shanaway, where at least three pairs exhibited nesting behaviour near the farm-house. The nest of one pair, discovered by W. R. Serventy on August 30, contained three chicks which were promptly moved by the adults after discovery and were not again found. Several other pairs haunted the pastures farther to the west. The nesting birds were seen driving off other species that frequented the pasture, and their restless calls were heard at night.

Australian Bustard (*Eupodotis australis*).—Two birds were seen flying low over the sand plain 12 miles west of Mogumber, and another flying over the river gorge at the Native Settlement. Two more came under notice 6 miles west of Mogumber. One of these landed about 300 yards from us and walked round in full view, majestic and dignified, and was later joined by the second bird, the pair of them eventually moving off on foot.

Straw-necked Ibis (*Threskiornis spinicollis*).—Not seen in the vicinity of the Moore River, but 9 were noted in the grazing fields 6 miles north of Bindoon on our outward journey.

White-faced Heron (*Notophox novae-hollandiae*).—Only two individuals were seen, one flying over the Shanaway paddocks and the other at the swampy section of the track 3 miles west of Mogumber.

Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*).—None were noticed on the Moore River but several were present on Lake Wannamal, 5 miles south of Mogumber. This was the only water-bird seen on the lake.

Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Uroaetus audax*).—One bird was seen 2 miles west of Shanaway.

Little Eagle (*Hieraetus morphnoides*).—A pair, identified by the under-wing pattern and wing contour, were soaring over the gorge in the vicinity of Shanaway on one occasion.

Square-tailed Kite (*Lophoictinia isura*).—A pair were regularly present near the farm, soaring over the gorge and surrounding countryside, and the quick quaver and yelp making up their characteristic call was heard from time to time. When perched one of the birds clearly revealed a sub-crest on the back of the head.

Brown Hawk (*Falco berigora*).—This hawk was fairly plentiful along the wooded fringe on the plateau and was noted on the

sand plain, where one was occasionally seen flying low or perched at the top of a small banksia.

Nankeen Kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*).—Occasional birds were seen over the sand plain near the river gorge.

Other hawks were seen on frequent occasions but were not identified, and a number of nests, obviously the work of the larger species, came under passing notice in the taller eucalypts of the gorge region.

Boobook Owl (*Ninox novae-seelandiae*).—A bird was calling near the farm-house from the river gums in the gorge each night, and once at least, into earliest dawn.

Purple-crowned Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*).—None were seen in that section of the Moore River which we worked intensively; the nearest was a flock heard at Lake Wannamal and another at New Noreia.

White-tailed Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*).—The largest aggregation was a flock of about 25 seen opposite the Mogumber railway station. In the gorge country occasional smaller parties were encountered and in a tract of wandoo pairs and a group of four, possibly nesting birds.

Galah (*Kakatoe roseicapilla*).—About 6 birds used to roost in the river gums at Shanaway and two or three individuals were constantly about. Another small party of 8-10 was seen at Mogumber. Whitlock did not meet with this species, which has notably extended its range southwards since his time. A nesting colony has recently established itself near Gingin and a few birds appear now and again at Marbling Brook, Lower Chittering.

Smoker Parrot (*Polytelis anthopeplus*).—Not very plentiful in the area we were investigating and small parties of up to 8 birds were seen occasionally. Whitlock did not meet with the species, which is another of those which has spread southwards and increased in numbers in recent years. Mr. Eric Schmidt informs us that it is now to be found throughout the year at Lower Chittering.

Western Rosella (*Platycecus icterotis*).—The mellow call-notes of this species were twice heard in the gorge but it did not come under direct observation.

Twenty-eight Parrot (*Barnardius zonarius*).—The common parrot of the district and very plentiful. Most of the birds seen had the yellow band across the lower breast. One bird collected, however, was a typical specimen of the race *B. z. semitorquatus*, with entirely green under-parts and a bright red forehead band. Another had an ill-defined yellow band and a smaller rufous-red forehead band. Both birds had marri seeds in their crops and many capsules nibbled around by these parrots were found under the trees. No typical "twenty-eight" calls were heard, the birds here calling in a series of high-pitched single notes. At Lower Chittering birds giving an intermediate thin double call were heard.

Kookaburra (*Dacelo gigas*).—Met with in the timbered gorge from Mogumber to Regan's Ford. This introduced bird had not, of course penetrated as far north in Whitlock's time. The Moore River probably represents its limit of distribution in this direction.

Sacred Kingfisher (*Halcyon sanctus*).—None were encountered at the Moore River itself but one bird was heard calling (the "ki-ki-ki" notes) at Lake Wannamal on August 26—an unusually early record. It was heard in Perth on September 3, a date also ahead of normal schedule.

Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*).—Calling insistently throughout the district in the timbered areas. A female (spotted plumage) was heard uttering its harsh "ehurr-ehurr" call from *within* a tree on the floor of the gorge and was attacked by a male Searlet Robin and later by a Willy Wagtail. A male Pallid was also calling not far away. The time was 11 a.m. On another occasion we saw a male Pallid on a blackboy spike on the sand plain at the edge of the wooded belt. Another cuckoo, probably a female (its plumage could not be observed in detail), flew to the spike and after accepting a caterpillar from the first bird, flew off. During its flight it was chased by a Willy Wagtail.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis pyrrhophanus*).—A bird was heard trilling in the depths of the gorge in the vicinity of Shanaway Farm on more than one occasion.

Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalis*).—Heard calling on several occasions in the timber in the vicinity of Shanaway. One evening we saw two birds (attributed to this species from the ventral pattern) running on the ground in one of the farm paddocks in the manner of pipits, and ascending fairly high into the air, pipit-fashion, when disturbed.

Golden Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites lucidus*).—The more common of the two bronze cuckoos and heard throughout the district, from Regan's Ford to Mogumber.

Welcome Swallow (*Hirundo neoxena*).—A pair had completed building a nest under the verandah of the farm-house at Shanaway but had not laid eggs up to the time of our departure (August 31). Other individuals were seen at the Native Settlement.

Tree-Martin (*Hylochelidon nigricans*).—A flock of some 50 birds was to be seen about the Shanaway paddocks. A party of about 12 was seen at New Noreia. There was no sign of the presence of the Fairy Martin.

Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura flabellifera*).—Heard singing throughout the gorge country from Regan's Ford to the Native Settlement and present at Mogumber, where a dead bird was picked up in the river-bed.

Willy Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*).—Plentiful and widely distributed. A pair near the farm were exhibiting nesting behaviour.

Restless Flycatcher (*Seisura iniquita*).—Uncommon. A bird was noted in the tea trees fringing Lake Wannamal and another in the river gums at Regan's Ford. This bird was uttering two

distinct calls—the “grinder” note and a more pleasant, whistling “kheer kheer,” given forth from a high perch. In 1903 Whitlock found this species to be more plentiful than the Willy Wagtail.

Brown Flycatcher (*Microeca leucophaea*).—Whitlock found this bird “fairly common all along the course of the river,” but we found it decidedly rare. We first came on it four days after our arrival, a pair in the valley floor east of Shanaway, and next day we saw a single bird near some of the farm out-buildings. Our only other record of the species was of a single individual near New Norcia.

Scarlet Robin (*Petroica multicolor*).—A surprisingly plentiful species in the gorge country above and below Shanaway, and the neighbouring timbered belts on the plateau. We did not meet with it near Mogumber where Whitlock found it fairly common in 1903, but perhaps it was overlooked. A nest placed 5 ft. 8 in. from the ground and containing one egg was found in the fork of a banksia in the river gorge 9 miles west of Mogumber. At Shanaway a pair were feeding three young birds recently out of the nest.

Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*).—Whitlock recorded this bird as being “far from plentiful.” Apart from one doubtful record at Mogumber, the only bird met with by our party was a brightly plumaged male seen by W. R. Serventy near Shanaway Farm.

Rufous Whistler (*Pachycephala rufiventris*).—Mostly found in pairs with males singing strongly. Its habitat did not appear to extend beyond the confines of the river valley where it was fairly numerous, particularly in the vicinity of Shanaway. In a small thicket of tall scrub in the gorge a mile west of the farm buildings a male was surprised in a demonstration that included a great deal of quick short flight from place to place near the ground, bobbing displays, and spirited song. There was another bird in the thicket but it was not seen clearly.

Western Shrike-Thrush (*Colluricincla rufiventris*).—Heard only once, at Mogumber.

Magpie Lark (*Grallina cyanoleuca*).—This species has expanded in range and abundance since Whitlock’s visit. He recorded it as “distinctly rare; and only seen on the upper portions of the river, near to and beyond New Norcia.” We met with the bird in the gorge country from Shanaway to Mogumber, and also at Lake Wannamal. At least two pairs were present in the neighbourhood of the Shanaway farm-house and the nest of one was found in a large marri. The old nest of another pair was noted some distance away.

Crested Bell-bird (*Orcoica gutturalis*).—The characteristic “pan-pan-panella” song was heard in the sand plain 4 miles west of Mogumber. We followed the ventriloquial call but the bird eluded us. The species was not met with by Whitlock.

Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike (*Coracina novae-hollandiae*).—Fairly plentiful throughout the wooded gorge country, and about

the trees and fences at Shanaway; also noted at Lake Wannamal. Not infrequently in pairs and one group of four seen together.

White-winged Triller (*Lalage sueurii*).—A male was singing vigorously in the tea tree thickets of Lake Wannamal on August 26, a rather early record for the species in the South-west.

White-fronted Chat (*Ephianura albifrons*).—Only observed once, three birds seen by W. R. Serventy west of Shanaway. We did not encounter the Crimson Chat (*E. tricolor*) met with by Whitlock on the sand plain west of Mogumber.

Western Warbler (*Gerygone fusca*).—Heard singing throughout the district wherever there were trees, from Regan's Ford to Mogumber and at Lake Wannamal. Pairs were engaged in intricate courtship-chases. One of the most plentiful of the Passerines.

Weebill (*Smicromis brevirostris*).—Similarly distributed to the preceding species and exceeding it in abundance.

Western Thornbill (*Acanthiza inornata*).—Found from Mogumber westwards. On three of the four separate occasions on which the species was logged the birds were either in pairs or singly and on the fourth the birds were still in the winter flock, at least five individuals comprising it. A bird in one of the pairs, at Mogumber, was carrying nesting material.

Brown Thornbill (*Acanthiza pusilla*).—Whitlock found this species only "near the source of the river," apparently above New Norcia. We met with it only once within our sphere of operations when a single bird was seen in the gorge 9 miles west of Mogumber. Its sparseness locally is a rather puzzling circumstance as the habitat appeared to be suitable.

Yellow-tailed Thornbill (*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*).—Prevalent in the lightly timbered country within and alongside the gorge. We found two pairs building, one in a banksia (7 ft. from the ground) and the other at much the same height in a *Jacksonia*.

Striated Field-Wren (*Calamanthus fuliginosus*).—A pair were encountered on the sand plain 11 miles west of Mogumber, and we had several "not certain" records when birds were flushed by our vehicle on the track through the sand plain between Shanaway and Mogumber. The species was not recorded by Whitlock.

Banded Blue Wren (*Malurus splendens*).—We found this wren prevalent throughout the area in thickets and woodland from Mogumber to Regan's Ford with its stronghold in the river gorge, where it was particularly plentiful. It was present also at Lake Wannamal. Birds encountered included males in full plumage, three of these being present in one family-party; adult males in eclipse plumage with black bills and an extent of blue colouring in the wing, one of these was about to re-don the bright plumage as indicated by patches of blue appearing on the cheeks; and young males distinguishable from the females only by the dark blue colouring on some of the flight feathers.

Blue-and-white Wren (*Malurus leuconotus*).—A party of females and a male in full plumage was met with in the sand plain

11 miles west of Mogumber. Whitlock also found it occurring "very sparingly and locally" in this area.

Black-faced Wood-Swallow (*Artamus cinereus*).—Our experiences with this species accorded with Whitlock's who did not find it common. We came on it on a few occasions on the sand plain.

Red-tipped Diamond-bird (*Pardalotus substriatus*).—Common throughout the gorge country in the eucalypts. One bird was seen carrying nest material.

Silvereye (*Zosterops australasiae*).—Whitlock found this bird "common, and breeding throughout the course of the river," which suggests a greater degree of abundance than we found. We logged the species only four times in the gorge country.

White-naped Honeyeater (*Melithreptus lunatus*).—Sparsely found in the gorge in the lofty gum trees where attention was attracted to it by its piping notes. It was observed on three occasions, in the vicinity of Shanaway.

Spinebill (*Acanthorhynchus superciliosus*).—This species was first encountered in the gorge 9 miles west of Mogumber and then again at Shanaway. This is probably the inland limit of the species' distribution in this region and it is of interest that Whitlock first met with it 10 miles downstream from Mogumber and thence westward.

Tawny-crowned Honeyeater (*Gliciphila melanops*).—We found the bird sparingly distributed in the sand plain south of the gorge where Whitlock remarked on its absence during his visit.

Brown Honeyeater (*Gliciphila indistincta*).—Singing vivaciously everywhere in the wooded areas and undoubtedly the most numerous Passerine in the district.

Singing Honeyeater (*Meliphaga vireseens*).—Met with at Lake Wannamal and on the sand plain, and at the edge of the gorge, but only locally and somewhat sparingly. Whitlock did not record it.

New Holland Honeyeater (*Meliornis novae-hollandiae*).—Only met with in the tea tree thickets at Lake Wannamal.

Red Wattle-bird (*Anthochaera carunculata*).—Present at Lake Wannamal and heard calling on most days in the gums in the vicinity of Shanaway Farm, but not very numerous.

Little Wattle-bird (*Anthochaera chrysoptera*).—Noted at Lake Wannamal, in the gorge between Shanaway and the Native Settlement, and on the borders of the plain where, in groves of the holly-leaved dryandra (*Dryandra floribunda*), it was locally numerous. A nest placed 8 ft. from the ground in a dryandra and containing one egg on which a bird was sitting, was found on the edge of the sand plain about a mile north-east of Shanaway.

Australian Pipit (*Anthus australis*).—Our records were: a pair regularly in the paddocks alongside Shanaway farm-house, a couple of pairs near the Native Settlement, and occasional single birds seen on the sand plain.

Raven (*Corvus coronoides*).—Odd birds were met with through-

out the gorge and the sand plain in its vicinity. Most were near the Native Settlement where the largest group, 13 birds, were scavenging at a rubbish heap. No specimens were actually examined and the identification is based on the characteristic call. In no case did we come on any indication of the presence of the other two species.

Grey Butcher-bird (*Cracticus torquatus*).—Heard occasionally in the timber around Shanaway, but the species was not plentiful.

Black-throated Butcher-bird (*Cracticus nigrogularis*).—Observed only once, at the Native Settlement, where an adult and an immature bird were seen.

Western Magpie (*Gymnorhina dorsalis*).—Not conspicuous in the area. There was a small group at Shanaway farm, where a nest was being built in a marri, another 2 miles eastward, and birds were observed at Mogumber. The Shanaway birds were heard singing during the moonlight at night. The species appeared to be more plentiful eastward to New Noreia. Whitlock had the same experience with it—"pretty common from Mogumber to New Noreia; but to the westward rather rare."

GENERAL REMARKS ON DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

It is tempting to compare the list just given with that published by Whitlock of his 1903 visit and also with the survey made by A. W. Milligan, with the assistance of Whitlock, Conigrave and others in the same year between Mogumber and the Wongan Hills via New Norcia (*The Emu*, vol. 4, 1904, p. 4). There are many pitfalls to be avoided in making such a comparison, as not only were the observations not made at strictly corresponding times of the year, but with such short visits it is impossible to take due account of the effects of fortuitous seasonal variations which may affect the status of nomadic species.

We dismiss from consideration, therefore, species of irregular occurrence like the Crimson Chat and Ground Cuckoo-Shrike (recorded by Whitlock and not by us), local migrants like the Grey Fantail (not reported by Whitlock) and forms whose status seems fairly conclusively to have been affected by settlement—the declining Rufous Treeeeeper (observed by Whitlock but absent during our survey) and the increasing Banded Plover (found more plentiful by us than it was in Whitlock's day). The Magpie Lark may also be omitted as it is a species which has increased generally in the South-west during the past 30 years or so (see *The Emu*, vol. 47, 1948, p. 278).

There remain a number of species which stand out as either definitely more numerous now than they were in 1903 and some others which are definitely rarer. For an analysis of the situation they present these birds may be divided into two groups: (a), the birds typical of the South-west corner, of the humid forest area; and (b), the birds of the drier areas which tend to avoid the South-west corner, particularly the heavy forest belt. Of the first-mentioned group only one, or perhaps two, come into the

picture. The Silvereve appears to have decreased in abundance and the other, the New Holland Honeyeater, may have increased in range (though we noticed it only at Lake Wannamal). In the second group, the dry-country South-west birds, there is an impressive list of species which have pushed farther into the South-west since 1903 or have increased in abundance, on the basis of Whitlock's assessment. They are Galah, Smoker, Crested Bell-bird, Striated Field-wren, Singing Honeyeater, and Black-throated Butcher-bird.

There are three other species in this category, however, which seem to have shown some decline: Restless Flycatcher, Brown Flycatcher and Dusky Miner (last-named not seen by us). The sparse population of the Blue-and-white Wren appears to have remained unchanged in the area though this species has made a notable advance southward nearer the coast.

There is a balance, therefore, in favour of an extension of the dry-country fauna, but no noticeable withdrawal of the South-west humid country fauna is evident, and in some cases, as in the Western Thornbill, Scarlet Robin and Spinbill, there has been a remarkable constancy in species boundaries over the period. Within the limits of the surveys there has been no outstanding instance of any member of the South-west humid country fauna extending its range.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Plumage Variation in the Willy Wagtail.—On December 28, 1951, at Naval Base, south of Fremantle, I saw a Willy Wagtail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) in irregular plumage. The bird was similar to the adults usually encountered, but had restricted white on the underparts. The underparts were black, except for the white upper breast, under tail coverts and a small portion of the adjacent abdomen.

—D. N. CALDERWOOD, Claremont.

Larder Habit in the Magpie.—Each morning six Magpies (*Gymnorhina dorsalis*) assemble at my back door for small pieces of raw meat. On February 25, 1952 they were there at 9 a.m. One young bird which feeds from my hand took a number of pieces and then made several attempts to hide the last one. First it tried to fit it into a crack in the brickwork, then into a small tin and finally it ran among some pot plants and left it there.

Later, in the afternoon about 5 p.m., they were there again and this magpie ran and recovered the piece of meat hidden in the morning. It came up to the door with it and swallowed it.

—(Miss) S. ELLIOTT, Nedlands.

Senegal Turtle Dove at Goomalling.—While travelling through Goomalling on December 21, 1951, I observed a party of eight Senegal Turtle Doves (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) feeding in the railway yard. Further investigation showed that the birds had